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**SOCIALISM:**  
**THE RIGHT TO LABOUR.**  
**IN REPLY TO M. THIERS.**

BY M. LOUIS BLANC.

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With Memoir and Portrait of the Author

**LONDON:**  
PUBLISHED BY A. CAMPBELL, 10, BOLT COURT,  
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1848.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

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*Jean Joseph*  
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*Louis Blanc*

# SOCIALISM—THE RIGHT TO LABOUR.

By LOUIS BLANC:

IN REPLY TO M. THIERS.

## MEMOIR OF LOUIS BLANC.

My first sight of Louis Blanc was at the palace of the Luxembourg. "*Voilà le petit!*" said a Frenchman near me, as he entered. He is, indeed, a little man, with a great *distingue*—a pigmy of price—a dwarf in body, but a giant in mind. He stands hardly five feet in height. His air, too, is extremely youthful, with his smooth, fair, hairless face, and his neat, slim, little figure. Although he approaches the manhood of forty, he might easily be mistaken for a boy of eighteen. Although he has a stern strength about him, it might be supposed from his first appearance that he was weak and effeminate. He entered, however, as one of the Provisional Government of the Republic of France, to deliver addresses to assemblies of working-men and masters, collected together by him, in his function of President of the Commission for the Government of the Workmen, to consult and decide on a plan for the organization of industry. He spoke, and the working-men were melted to tears, and even the masters were moved. His tones were soft and showery, or earnest and energetic. With his little figure buttoned up tight in a blue coat with gilt buttons, there he stood, mounted up, evidently awakening, convincing, deciding, with modulated voice and expressive action. There he stood, though so small, not the least of the great men who ruled over the destinies of the France of the Third Revolution.

Louis Blanc was born at Madrid, October, 28, 1813. His father was at that time inspector-general of finances in Spain. His mother was of Corsican origin, and he himself was brought up in Corsica, until he was seven years old. In 1820, he was sent with his brother to the college of Rhodes, where, when he was fifteen, he was more learned than his masters; at least, so says one of his biographers. In 1830, he left college, and rejoined his father in Paris. It was at the time of the barricades; and he threw over the barriers the buttons of his coat, because they bore on them the *fleur-de-lis*. Little did he think then, however, that, eighteen years afterwards, the Paris which he entered would salute him with acclamations in the midst of new barricades which he himself had contributed to raise. His father, a pensioner, was ruined by the fall of the Bourbons, and was consequently unable to further assist his son, whose first endeavour was to seek some situation. If now his figure is juvenile, his aspect then was almost infantine! Although seventeen, his biographers assert that he would have been supposed not more than twelve or thirteen years of age. With this childish appearance, his manners were also timid. In vain he

wandered over Paris seeking for an employment which should afford him but simple subsistence. His appearance prejudiced people against him. In the midst of France, in Paris—that monstrous city, which some have said should be the capital of the civilised world—he was likely to die of hunger. He reasoned upon this, and concluded that his situation was but the logical consequence of that vicious system—if system it can be called—which now obtains in society. In his sleepless nights, he meditated on plans of reform, and vowed, during the day, to engage in a determined war with those inhuman institutions which condemned the most numerous class to misery or to death. From his own experience, Louis Blanc was thus first struck with the terrible position of thousands who, notwithstanding every endeavour, are unable to find spheres in which to labour, either in body or mind.

Assisted by a small pension which had been given him by his uncle, he continued to seek employment with an indefatigable perseverance. He gave lessons in mathematics; and, in 1831, he found a situation as an under-clerk. During this time, also, he had addressed himself to a friend of his family, M. de Flaugergues, an old president of the Chamber of Deputies. This gentleman had remarked the high intelligence of young Blanc, and wished to inspire him with a taste for politics as a science. By him he was initiated into the first principles of political economy. At the house of the Gerald family, likewise, he made the acquaintance of M. Lorne de Brillemont, brother of the old deputy of that name, who was then seeking a tutor for the sons of M. Hallette, of Arras. This gentleman, after spending an hour with Louis Blanc, judged him fully worthy, and proposed him for the situation. It was a good chance for the young clerk, and he was accepted. He stayed two years at Arras. It was there that he furnished his first weapons as a publicist and a poet. Besides some remarkable articles which he published in the "*Propagateur du Pas-de-Calais*," he there composed three works—a poem entitled "*Mirabeau*," a poem on the *Hotel des Incubides*, and an "*Eloge de Manuel*"—which were crowned by the Academy of Arras. The activity he possessed now longed, however, for a wider field. The education of M. Hallette's children was finished, and he desired to enter into the lists of the Parisian press.

He returned to Paris in 1834, with letters of introduction to Conseil, the collaborator of Armand Carrel in the "*National*." But Conseil was like most Parisian journalists, he was everywhere and no



where. Louis Blanc sought him for many days without success. At that time the "National" was published in the *Rue Croissant*. One day, as the young author went for the tenth time to the office of that journal, nearly despairing of ever finding the un-com-e-able Conseil, he raised his eyes towards heaven, as if to call for it to witness the inutility of his efforts, and perceived an inscription, bearing, in large letters, the words, "Le Bon Sens." That journal was as advanced in the advocacy of reform as the "National;" and Louis Blanc, having two articles in his pocket, decided on leaving one for the "Bons Sens." It was, however, no small matter for one so modest to meet the editor in chief. Just as he was about penetrating into his sanctuary, a species of involuntary terror pervaded his limbs. "What shall I say?" thought he—"my young look will go against me again. They will suppose my articles are not my own." The perspiration stood upon his forehead. The door was there before him, and he had not the strength to open it. He stood still in the passage, without advancing or receding. At length a door opened, and he found himself face to face with a porter. "Who do you want?" said the porter. Louis Blanc was caught. "Sir," he replied, "I seek the office of the chief editor of the 'Bons Sens.'" "Come with me, and I will lead you to it," was the answer. Thus Providence, in the shape of a porter, played a great part in the destiny of Louis Blanc. It was in despite of himself that he was conducted before M.M. Rodde and Cauchois-Lemaire, then principal editors of the "Bons Sens." M. Rodde received the young author with great affability, but M. Cauchois-Lemaire looked more grave. He has avowed since, that he hesitated to take as serious such precocious maturity. He could not for the moment believe in the young Hercules. A first article was, however, accepted, and a second, and a third; and, in fine, M. Cauchois-Lemaire made a provisional offer of 1,200 francs to his young assistant. After fifteen days, however, they placed the salary of Louis Blanc at 2,000 francs, then at 3,000; and lastly, the chief editorship was confided to him. The sensation which his articles produced was immense, and they exercised great influence upon the democratic party, and helped considerably to associate them for a common purpose, by the union of the theories of the political school and the social school—the one as the means, the other as the end.

In his new position, Louis Blanc entered into relations with the "National," for which he wrote a number of political articles. "There," says M. Sarrans, "was Carrel, that man of a thousand, that choice spirit, powerful in character and in genius, and who, from the heights of his probity, crushed all the intrigants without principle, whom the revolutionary whirlwind had blown upon the top of the ladder." Carrel was a Voltairian. But it happened one day that Louis Blanc submitted to his examination an article, in which he attacked the insufficiency of the political and social reforms preached by the patriarch of Ferney. Voltaire, according to Louis Blanc, had caused the political revolution of '89,

Rousseau the social revolution of '93; and he preferred Rousseau to Voltaire. This proposition was so contrary to the ideas of Carrel, that for a moment it perplexed his excellent judgment. Struck, however, with the vivid reflections and strong thoughts of his opponent, the great publicist demanded time to reflect, and afterwards did not hesitate to defend the severe principles of Louis Blanc against the attacks of those who had adopted nothing but the vices of a revolution. This debate was, moreover, the epoch of a considerable change in the political and social tendencies of the "National."

In 1834, Louis Blanc published also, in the "Republican Review," various works of high importance: among others, a magnificent article on Virtue considered as the Means of Government, the title of which is sufficient to recommend it: and a beautiful estimate and appreciation of Mirabeau. He contributed also to other reviews. In 1838, however, a new proprietary wished to change the political tendencies of the "Bons Sens," and Louis Blanc, with all the other editors, retired. This retirement caused the death of the journal. Another tribune was wanted for the eloquent defender of the popular cause, and Louis Blanc immediately founded the "Revue du Progres," in which he has profoundly treated almost all the great questions of the time, whether political, social, financial, commercial, literary, or industrial. During the time that he gave his name and talent to this publication, he was also occupied with his most famous work on the "Organisation of Industry." Never had a book such a re-echo as this. That problem, which had used up generations of thinkers, was there popularised. If the problem, in many respects, yet remains unsolved by Louis Blanc, he has still the credit of having rendered its superficialities more intelligible to the mass, more simple to the student.

In his "Organization of Industry," Louis Blanc thus defines his political system:—"That which is wanting," says he, "for the enfranchisement of the working classes is the tools of labour: the function of government is to furnish them. If you would have us define the State, according to our conception, we should reply: the State is the banker of the poor." In other words, he accepts the idea that the employment of all its members is the obligation of a nation, or that national employment is the duty and function of government.

The first ten years of the reign of Louis Philippe were fruitful with great events. While editing the "Revue du Progres," it occurred to Louis Blanc that he would also be the historian of these. He paid a visit to each of the actors in that eventful drama. He told each that he intended to write the history of the last ten years, and requested that they would relate to him the events in which they had any share, direct or indirect; indicating, at the same time, that he should apply his judgment in the use of the materials furnished. Thus originated the "Histoire des Dix Ans;" a work which, in the historical library, is worthy to rank after "Zenophon's Anabasis," and "Caesar's Commentaries." This was followed up by

Louis Blanc with his "History of the French Revolution," which he develops with all the grandeur of the epic spirit which it possessed. It has been well said to unite the vigour of Tacitus with the profundity of Pascal. In this work, also, he gives us the formula of his philosophy: "Three great principles," says he "obtain in the world, and in history: authority, individualism, fraternity. \* \* \* The principle of authority is that which stupifies the life of nations with worn-out creeds, with a superstitious respect for tradition, with inequality; and which employs constraint as the means of government. The principle of individualism is that which, taking man apart from society, renders him the sole judge of that which is around and within him—gives him an exalted sentiment of his rights, without indicating his duties—abandons him to his own powers, and lets all other government go on as it will. The principle of fraternity is that which, regarding as solidary, or indissolubly connected together, all the members of the great human family, tends to organise society, the work of man, on the model of the human body, the work of God, and founds the power of government on persuasion, on voluntary assent. Authority has been manifested by Catholicism with an *eclat* which astonishes. It prevailed till Luther. Individualism, inaugurated by Luther, is developed with an irresistible power; and separated from the religious element, it rules the present—it is the soul of things. Fraternity, announced by the thinkers of "the Mountain," disappeared then in a tempest; and at present appears to us but in the far-off land of the ideal; but all grand hearts call for it, and it already occupies and illumines the highest spheres of intelligence. Of these three principles, the first engenders oppression, by the suppression of personality; the second causes oppression by anarchy; and the third alone by harmony gives birth to liberty." Such is a succinct statement of Louis Blanc's political positions. They are more true than they are original, and they are all the more to be accepted for this.

Thus was Louis Blanc engaged till the Revolution of February. Previously he took part in the patriotic banquets at Paris, and at Dijon.

The Revolution of February elevated him to one of the first positions in France, as one of the most influential members of the Provisional Government. The ascendancy which he exercised over the masses was immense and national. He seized instinctively and completely the idea of the Revolution. He fully comprehended that it was not only a political revolt, but also an industrial insurrection—a new organization of society; that it was more than a question of monarchy and republic; that it was the working classes, not only claiming universal suffrage, but universal employment, and the guarantee of subsistence; in fact, that it was the problem of the age—the Organization of Labour—requiring its solution.

Shortly after the Revolution of February he was appointed the president of a commission, composed of delegates from the various trades of Paris, to deliberate on the labour question. The result was, the plan of industrial organization inserted in the present publication, which was afterwards presented, in the form of a report, to the National Assembly. Nothing, however, was done in the matter, at the time, there being an evident intention, on the part of the Assembly, to burke the question altogether. This was shown in their rejecting the motion for a minister of labour, and in other proceedings indicative of the hostile feelings of the majority. In the meantime, the national workshops were organized by M. Marie, in opposition to Louis Blanc, and continued in operation till the sanguinary insurrection of June. It was the proposal to break up these establishments, without suggesting a substitute, that led to that fearful outbreak. Prior to this, however, there had been a demonstration against the Assembly on the 15th of May, which resulted in the imprisonment of Raspail, Barbes, Albert, and several others, and in connection with which an endeavour was made to inculpate Louis Blanc. A motion to this effect was submitted to the Assembly in the latter end of May, but negatived, and so the matter rested till after the June insurrection. On the ascendancy of the *bourgeoisie*, after that disastrous event, the charge against Louis Blanc was revived, in connection with the latter outbreak, and an attempt made to prosecute him for both. On August the 20th a proposition of the Cavaignac government to prosecute him came on for consideration; and, after an eloquent defence, which had little effect on his political enemies, the Assembly, by a large majority, decided to proceed against him for the affair of May 15th, but refused the authorization for the insurrection of June, which would have handed him over to the military tribunals. On the same day, before the warrant was issued, knowing the animus of the parties he had to deal with, he left Paris. On the day after he arrived in London, in exile, where he still remains. Before leaving, he intimated that he would be ready, when his trial came on, to meet his accusers; but, in the meantime, he would seek an asylum in England. Since then, the discussion on the Right to Labour question took place, in which Thiers attacked him. The preceding is his answer, being the last production which has issued from his pen, and one of the most argumentative and able. We now close this hurried notice of the author. The work itself will well repay perusal, and be found one of the best contributions that has lately appeared to the social literature of the day.

[For the major portion of the foregoing memoir, we are indebted to a sketch by GOODWIN BARNBY, which appeared in *Tait's Magazine* of April last.]



## THE RIGHT TO LABOUR.

A HUNDRED and twenty thousand electors had sent me to the National Assembly, with injunctions to aid in the establishment of a new Constitution, to maintain the *Right to Labour*, to declare my opinions on the evils of our present position, their causes, and the means of remedying them.

It was the wishes of these 120,000 electors, then, that were slighted, and their share in the sovereignty confiscated, when, upon an accusation proved to be calumnious, in contempt of a former decision of the Assembly, without a fair debate, in a single night, with indecent haste, and by an ill concealed *coup d'état*, my opponents managed to procure my absence from the approaching discussion on the Constitution.

I will not remind them that when, in my person, they trampled under foot the inviolability of Parliament, they imprudently destroyed a guarantee that, perchance, the vicissitudes of human affairs may one day make them regret. I know that political passions are too blind to consequences!

I will confine myself strictly to protesting, in the name of my constituents, against the unjust decision of which I am the victim; and since the liberty of the tribune is denied me, I will have recourse to the liberty of the press.

The National Assembly has lately rejected the Right to Labour, acting under the influence of the fatal days of June. And first, let us say a few words about this insurrection, whose causes have been purposely misrepresented. Its causes! There is but one, and its name is—Misery! Speculate at your ease on the disasters of Paris, ye men of the old parties; let your passions, your resentment, and your hatred revel in the desolation of her mourning mothers, and the funerals of her murdered sons! History, which you will never vanquish—history will tell you that revolt this time arose from the madness of hunger, and that behind the barricades the cry was heard of “Bread or bullets!” an ominous change on the watchword of Lyons.\*

The fact is, that long before the revolution of February, a deep-seated evil was exhausting the French industrial world, and demanded, extensive social reforms. Competition, whose worst dangers England had warded off solely by her daring, her perseverance, and genius,—that is to say, by her dominion of the sea, by seizing on the most distant markets, and accomplishing, by her merchants, what Rome had done with the sword, the conquest of the world—competition, in our country, was confined within a circle too narrow and too restricted not to terminate, sooner or later, in the most fearful calamities. Thus, the industrial world was transformed into an armed camp, and industry became a deadly warfare; production was governed by no laws, the blindest chance directing its feverish activity; merchants were compelled to live a precarious life and play a terrible game, panting after the stake, between failure one day and bankruptcy the next; all interests were opposed to each other; and, to complete the confusion, crowds of labourers were there, eager to sell themselves at the lowest price, every day increasing in number, and every day more hungry and furious. Such is the state to which individualism had reduced a society in which the love of gain had been absurdly taken for superior talents in business. I have now in my possession a collection of letters addressed to me by different manufacturers, immediately after my installation in the Luxembourg. I shall publish them as the last will and testament of industrial arrangements

founded upon competition! Nothing can be more conclusive, and at the same time more melancholy, than the testimony they offered. Some freely offer to make us a present of their establishments, as being unable to continue them; others, in placing at the disposal of the government their buildings, raw material, and machinery, ask no better remuneration than to be appointed superintendents of the national workshops; and all loudly demand the intervention of the State for the protection of industry, which they prove to be utterly ruined if assistance be not rendered speedily. One thing which is not generally known, but of which I shall furnish irrefutable proofs, is, that the idea of publishing the plan of a vast social reform, previous to the convocation of the Assembly, was first suggested to me by the vehement and repeated solicitations with which I was overwhelmed, not only by the workmen, but still more by many large manufacturers, who had been reduced to unutterable distress, arising from causes of long duration.

The revolution of February, then, did not produce the commercial crisis; it merely showed it in all its intensity. It is the height of ignorance and child-ishness to attribute the ruin of trade to the speeches at the Luxembourg. Those who refer all the distress and troubles of our present position to social reforms which have only been enunciated, but never put in practice, are like the patient who, after refusing the prescriptions of his physician, should charge him with having made him worse. On the other hand, it must be well understood that Socialism does not date its commencement from the revolution of February. The revolution brought it more prominently before the public, but was not its cradle. For a long time an under-current of opinion had been spreading among the people, which found no echo in the parliamentary tribune, and was but feebly heard in the daily press or other publications. While vulgar great men were endeavouring to satisfy their ambition in the ballot-box, and filling the world with empty noise, poor operatives, in the close atmosphere of their manufactories, supposed to be absorbed in the cares of their daily labour, were elevating their minds to considerations of vast import, living in the highest regions of thought, and studying the causes of the misery under which they groaned. Their hopes conceived a radiant future that would succeed the present diseased and enervated social system. They enquired into the law of past social changes, to ascertain if civilization had not yet another step to take; and observing that the lower classes had first ceased to be *slaves*, and afterwards to be *serfs*,—inspired by noble aspirations, they asked themselves if they should not soon cease to be *proletarians*, this being but a newer form of slavery. But where should they find the means of enfranchising themselves? It had been already pointed out to our generation by this motto, the eternal glory of our fathers—LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY; it only required to give a clear definition of the three terms of this sacred device; and here the natural instinct of the people did not deceive them.

They understood—

That Liberty is not only the *right*, but also the *power*, granted to every man to develop his faculties under the dominion of justice and the safeguard of the law.

That a diversity of powers and capabilities being a necessary condition for the existence of society, Equality consists in all having an equal power of developing their unequal faculties.

That, lastly, Fraternity is but the poetical expression of that state of mutual dependence and har-

\* The legend on the flags of the Lyons workmen was—“Let us live by working, or die fighting!”

mony which will eventually make of society one great family.

Therefore—

We must have done with individualism, or *laissez passer*, because individualism is the abandonment of the poor, the weak, and the ignorant; and for thousands of human beings to *let them alone* is to *let them die*.

We must put an end to anarchical competition, because anarchy is nothing else than despotism run mad; and the contest between the strong and the weak is, in fact, oppression.

There must be no more motives derived from the fierce antagonism of interests, because, where the success of one depends on the ruin of others, society will be filled with hatred, and distracted by civil war.

Such are the ideas that for many years have been silently forming in the people's minds, in the manufacturing towns.

But, I say again, that those who lived in the upper circles of society were utterly ignorant of the intellectual movement going on among the lower classes. The *soi-disant* statesmen of the monarchy, seemingly so wise in politics and legislation—your clever financialists—your celebrated manufacturers, had no idea that an entirely new world was growing up beneath them. The hour must come, then, when they would be suddenly aroused, as it were, by a thunder-clap. That hour did come at last, and will ever remain in history as the DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION OF FEBRUARY.

But questions which had been long familiar to the people of Paris, Lyons, and all the large manufacturing towns, appeared to the greater part of the *bourgeoisie* under the false and fearful aspect of a strange and unknown danger; and hence arose the most serious misunderstandings. To the greater part of the *bourgeoisie* the advent of the Republic was the ultimatum of progress; not so to the people, who looked upon political reform only as a *means* to attain the *end*, which was social reform. This was evident the very first day of the Republic, when a working man—his eyes flashing fire, and his countenance pale with excitement—suddenly entered the council-room, and making his musket ring upon the floor, demanded, in the name of the people, the acknowledgment of the Right to Labour. It was evident also, when, on the 28th of February, thousands of workmen, their dress still soiled with the dust of the barricades, filled the Place de Grève, with flags inscribed with these words, "*Organization of Labour*." My former colleagues cannot forget why they proposed a *government commission* at the Luxembourg; nor that it was for a long time opposed by me and Albert. A committee of enquiry, indeed!—without a budget, or any other powers than speech! I foresaw the consequences of such a proceeding. Besides, the people required something further; their demand was for "the immediate creation of a Minister of Labour."

The Luxembourg, then, in February and March, 1848, being but a directing voice on the road of progress, we may well wonder at the wisdom of those who blame us "for having excited the hopes of the people." And how should we have addressed a furnishing but victorious people, when the storm of passion was at its highest? What language could we have held at such a time, to a people who had been long impressed with the idea of their emancipation? Should we have said to them—

"You are suffering—but what can be done? Such is the decree of fate. That which the ancients called *FATUM* is, in fact, misery—unalterable misery. In the cause of order, for fear of exciting your impatience, we are compelled to deny you the smallest hope. Leave your muskets here, and go quietly to your

homes; should you find the celebrated inscription of Dante's hell—('Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch' entrate,' 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here')—on the doors of your garrets, learn to be resigned; and teach resignation to your furnishing children, when they cry for bread; and to your disconsolate wives, when they curse the day that they were mothers!"

By such judicious language as this, I suppose, the profound philosophers who attack us would have quieted the multitude! But, really, it is madness! To return to our subject:—Every century has its peculiar characteristic, by which it is distinguished in history. Individualism was the characteristic of the eighteenth century; and we may with justice assert, that the 19th will be known in history as the Socialist century. You may calumniate, proscribe, and even put to death the great criminals of the Luxembourg; the idea whose ministers they were will not perish with them. Nay, the justice and interest of those who support this idea insure its ultimate triumph. The force of events is with it.

With these remarks, we may at once proceed to the debate in the Assembly on the Right to Labour, and examine what weight there may be in the charges brought by M. Thiers against the Socialists.

In his speech of the 13th September, M. Thiers attacked my doctrines, while he regretted my absence. It rested only with himself and his friends to spare him a regret that, unfortunately, came too late, and, to suspicious minds, might have seemed scarcely sincere, after the vote of the 25th August. In any case, however, they will not silence me by banishing me.

"I am going," commences M. Thiers, "to lay before you the principles on which society is based: I do not mean the society of any particular country or age, but society as it has been in all ages and countries."

Thus, M. Thiers begins by claiming for himself a large number of supporters. But does he really believe that, in all countries and ages, property, liberty, and competition have been understood, defined, and practised in the same manner? If he does not, of what value is his pompos introduction? If he does believe it, the ignorance is scarcely credible on the part of a statesman. Does property, for instance, arise amongst us out of the same state of things, or rest upon the same basis, as among the Ancients, the Arabs, or the Orientals? Is not M. Thiers aware that there have existed, and still exist, pastoral people, who admit no individual property in the soil; people who agree with Jean Jacques, in saying, "The fruits of the earth belong to all, but the soil itself is no one's"? Is there no difference between that property which only extends to the hereditary possession of the soil, and that which claims a right over the slave that tills it? Did Quesnay and the Physiocrats, who considered the proprietor as the dispenser of the fruits of agriculture, the cashier of industry, and a sort of public officer, look upon property in the same light as those who so long considered it as including the right to use it according to their whim (*uti et abuti*), whose motto was, "May I not do as I like with my own"?—and would not these, again, have viewed our laws of ejectment for public purposes as a violation of the right of property? When, in '89, tithes were abolished, M. Thiers is well aware that all the clergy exclaimed that it was robbery; and what Mirabeau called a *restoration*, the Abbé Sicéyès termed *spoliation*. The truth of the matter is, that notions respecting property have varied in every age and country; and the same may be said of our notions of liberty and competition.

Feudal society, which acknowledged serfdom, was probably based on a very different principle of liberty



from that of modern society. The system of wardens and freemen was not based on competition, as the system which has developed itself since 1789, under the name of industrial liberty. It is a matter of doubt, then, whether M. Thiers really understood his own meaning, when he declared that he came forward to defend "the society of all ages and countries."

I will now ask myself, as M. Thiers did, what is, or rather, what ought to be the fundamental principle of property?—and, in accordance with him, I reply—Labour. But from this flow two results, that M. Thiers must necessarily admit:

The first is, that all property not derived from labour has no foundation in right; is, therefore, unlawful.

The second is, that all labour which does not lead to property receives no indemnification; is, therefore, oppressive.

Shall we judge society as it exists, according to these rules?

The first thing it presents to us is the heart-rending spectacle of an immense crowd of individuals, each one of whom might say—"I have worked for the support of my fellow creatures, and am not myself sure of always finding bread to eat: I have assisted at the manufacture of the most valuable stuffs, and yet am clothed in rags: I have laboured to erect palaces, and can hardly find a place to lay my head."\*

Would that these were but isolated, casual instances, resulting from purely accidental causes! But no; it is an universal permanent state, produced by a radically vicious system of society. In consequence of this social system, most of the implements of labour, lands, means of subsistence, and raw materials of all kinds, are in the possession of a small and determinate portion of society. The consequence is, that as labour cannot be obtained without the implements, those who do not possess them are necessarily in subjection to those that do; hence, also, the former are compelled to submit to the stipulated conditions of the latter, and consent that, instead of enjoying the whole fruits of his toil, the labourer shall only receive sufficient to pay for the use of the implements. So that, when M. Thiers declares that, in justice, "the fundamental principle of property is labour," society replies that, in fact, "the labour of one class is the source of property to the other."

Justice and fact being thus in manifest opposition, M. Thiers must cease either to proclaim the right or to defend the fact: we wait for his decision!

To continue:—

"Man, without labour, is the most wretched of beings. God has endowed him with high faculties; but, previous to his exercising them, he is the most miserable creature. Without labour he perishes. Society, like the individual, is wretched, if not engaged in labour. Well, then! Nature and society say to him: 'Work, work, and you shall be sure of the fruits of your labour;' and, in saying this, they give him a powerful motive to action. But it was necessary that this motive should never cease to act;

therefore they add: 'Work, work, and the fruits of your labour shall be for you and for your children.' His ardour now becomes indefatigable, and, having always an object in view, he works on to the last day of his life."

I beg M. Thiers's pardon, but society never says, never can say, anything of the sort, to the greater part of its members; and if it dared to address such derisive language to the proletarians, they would reply in such words as these:—"You call on us to work! Why we have no field to labour in; no wood for building, nor iron to forge; neither wool, silk, or cotton, to manufacture stuffs. Nor is this all. Are we not forbidden to gather fruits in this place—to drink at the fountain in another—and to hunt the wild animals in a third—or make ourselves a shelter under the foliage of the trees? We are equally without the means of livelihood and of labour; because, when we came into the world, we found that every thing around us had been seized upon; and cruel laws, that were made without our sanction, and before our birth, have left to chance the care of our destiny; in consequence of which laws, the MEANS OF LABOUR, which the earth seemed to have reserved for the use of all her children, have become the exclusive property of a few, whose duty it is to dispose of us, since we have not the power to dispose of ourselves. Work indeed! We are quite ready—but do you think it depends upon our will alone? 'Work! and you will be ensured the fruits of your labour.'—Alas! and how could you ensure us the fruits of our labour, when you cannot, or dare not, ensure us employment for our hands? 'Work! the product of your labour shall be for you and your children.' You deceive yourself and us. The product of our labour will most decidedly not be for us or for our children; for our helplessness places us at the mercy of others, who offer us, in exchange for our productive labour—not that which we have created—but merely a salary that enables us just to live while we can work; and which competition, having reduced to a minimum that is barely sufficient for the mere necessities of life, leaves no room for saving, and must be swallowed up the first idle day that occurs, from bad times or illness. It is not the prospect of future benefit to our children, then, that stimulates us to exertion; the only stimulant we know is hunger."

After this, let M. Thiers call property a *right*, and declare it essential to society—inherent in human nature—I shall not be inclined to contradict him. It is certain that man can exist only by appropriating to himself external objects. And for the very reason that property is a *right*, we should be careful not to debase it by making it a *privilege*. For the very reason that the right of property is inherent in human nature, all who belong to humanity may claim to enjoy its advantages. We do not deny the right to the injury of any—we claim it for the benefit of all; and the question resolves itself into this.—To ascertain whether society, as now constituted, in which we find thousands of men earning thirty or forty *sous* (15d. or 20d.) a day, averaging twelve, thirteen, and fourteen hours' work, does give every individual the power to obtain property, as the object of, and incentive to, labour: whether society, that dares not even furnish the means of labour to so many poor wretches in daily fear of starvation, from bad times and loss of work, does really respect, in each individual, those rights which are acknowledged as *essential to human nature*. For, if M. Thiers's explanation of the right of property be correct—and such is our opinion—it is plain that every man without property falls short of his condition as a man, since he wants that which is *essential to his nature*. Undoubtedly the right of property is a natural right; it must be held sacred;

\* The following lines of Virgil beautifully express the same idea:—

Sic vos non vobis nedicatis aves  
Sic vos non vobis vellera fertis oves  
Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes  
Sic vos non vobis fertis aratra boves.

In vernacular thus:—

Ye birds build nests, but not for you the eggs;  
Ye sheep your fleeces bear, but others have their use;  
Ye bees sweet honey make but not for you the feast;  
Ye oxen draw the ploughs, but yet no harvest reap.

and, for that very reason, we are bound to admit all men to the enjoyment of it. And the means are, to establish social institutions which shall tend to place the implements of labour within the reach of all; to substitute for the present system, based upon individualism, one that is founded upon association. We must put an end to wages, by the principle of association. But we will explain this presently; our object being, now, to follow M. Thiers, step by step, in the course he has himself taken in the discussion.

The second principle on which society is based, according to M. Thiers, is social liberty; "which," says he, "consists in following that occupation which is best suited to one's talents, in choosing one's own profession."

If I am not very much mistaken, such an assertion must have been received by the working classes with the greatest astonishment. (What! are those poor children free to enter the career of the law, to devote themselves to literature, or aspire after the lucrative offices of finance, who, in order to increase a parent's wages by the fruit of their infantile labour, are sent at the age of seven to a manufactory, where the germ of their intellect is blighted, their soul's health ruined, and all their faculties engaged in attending to a simple wheel? What! are those youths, the poor man's sons, free to follow the bent of their inclination for agriculture or commerce, whom the conscription devotes to a military life, that the rich can escape by means of their wealth? And are those frail women free to become honest matrons, who, according to the melancholy account of Parent Duchatelet, are irresistibly driven into a hopeless life of prostitution by the depth of their misery? Ah, Sir! can you not see that, the system which you defend leaving everything to the chances of a fortunate birth, it is chance, and not the natural law of his talents and inclinations, that nearly always decides the choice of a man's career? Do you not see that the peculiar and fundamental vice of the social system, of which you are the panegyrist, is to disorganize and destroy all arrangements for the harmonious adaptation of pursuits to talents? and you only instances are some few who, gifted with remarkable energy, and aided by peculiar circumstances, have succeeded in overcoming the obstacles that surround the poor man's cradle. The poor man free, indeed! Why we don't even leave him the liberty of enjoying the roadside causeway or the pavement of our streets; for if, from want of work, he asks our charity, we punish him as a beggar; or being without a better shelter, he sleeps upon our palace-steps, we imprison him as a vagabond. No, the poor man has not the social liberty of which you speak, since the secret tyranny of your institutions awaits him at the very threshold of life—scarcely, indeed, does the rich come to enjoy this liberty; enslaved as he is to social prejudices, engendered by the vanity of class distinction. Louis XVI., who would have made a happy and respectable locksmith, owing to the accident of his birth was compelled to leave his crown on a scaffold; and many a man has died on a mattress, after having lived in a garret, who had in him the germs of an intellect that might have governed empires. If you want the proof of it, study the revolutions that have agitated society, and, tearing off the surface, have often dragged from its lowest depths talents that have astonished mankind!

After having asserted that every one in the present day enjoys *social liberty*, M. Thiers hastily concludes that it depends upon each whether he shall be fortunate or unfortunate, rich or poor, that the former succeed because they possess virtue and talents; and if any should happen to fall from the

summit of prosperity, it is because they are deficient in prudence.

It is extraordinary that any one who pretends to be an observer of facts, should hold such language.

I will just ask M. Thiers: if virtue and talents are sufficient to enable a literary man, without fame or money, to publish his works?

If virtue and talents are sufficient to enable a man of deep thought, who lives in poverty and obscurity, to reap the fruits of his discoveries?

If prudence is sufficient to enable an industrious manufacturer to save himself from the ruinous and unavoidable effects of our industrial anarchy—distant failures, unexpected bankruptcies, popular seditions, and the frequent recurrence of a commercial crisis?

I would ask him also if it is not true that in the state of society which he eulogises, large fortunes may be increased without the possessors taking any trouble, simply because their money gains other money for them?

If it is not true that in this society, where we lend to none but the rich, those who stand least in need of credit have the least difficulty in getting it?

If it is not true that in this wolfish society the richer a man is the easier he can increase those riches, and the deeper he is sunk in poverty the more difficult for him to alter his condition?

If it is not true that in this lottery system of society we meet with millionaires in the cradle, men who roll in wealth, not from any virtue or talents they possess, but because they happened to be born with a silver spoon in their mouths; or, as Beaumarchais says, because they took the trouble to come into the world?

If it is not true that there exist at this time thousands of ways to acquire wealth, protected, or at least rendered available by our institutions, though entirely independent of talents or virtue, such as, for instance, the various modes of engaging skill and intelligence in the service of capital—unfair competition, by a systematic course of keeping prices down or adulterating the articles for sale—stock-jobbing—gambling on the Exchange—and usury?

The fact is, that in the present day no one depends on his good conduct, wisdom, and prudence for success, as in justice ought to be the case. How often is the most sagacious forethought disappointed, and the most courageous exertion of no avail, in this all-destroying anarchy, where the ever active but debasing tyranny of chance rules invisible!

"The third principle," continues M. Thiers, "is competition, that is to say, emulation."

We must take care how we use this term emulation, for there are different kinds, and there is great danger in employing ill defined expressions. We shall very soon show wherein genuine emulation consists; but we will first examine the meaning of the word competition. Its etymology will point it out at once—*cum petere, together with to reach or aim at*, going without something in company with another; so, in the race of fortune, competition signifies the ardour that each feels to pass by his neighbour and reach the prize. But if the space be too narrow, or the competitors too numerous, they will be jostling, and pushing, and tumbling over each other, and the victors will reaping the goal only over the bodies of their rivals, the living and the dead. Of what avail is a powerful incentive if it leads to confusion? Of what avail the strongest motive if it impels to ruin? Is there any stimulant equal to hatred, envy, or revenge? Is not covetousness composed of all these?—covetousness, at once the offspring and the food of competition. Oh! ye wise legislators, who, when you wish to arouse society to action, seek for motives in the worst passions of human nature, in all that stirs



the mud and filth to the surface! oh, forget not that competition is a fierce struggle, that every gain has its corresponding loss, that through every cry of joy is heard the groan of some victim. Two men meet to fight a duel: there is emulation between them to cut each other's throats! and such is the emulation of competition.

I admire the calmness with which M. Thiers exclaims, "Work, work, at your risk and peril; try to do better than your neighbour; observe how he goes about it; if you succeed, the purchaser comes to you."

This advice would undoubtedly be excellent, if, to do better than one's neighbour, all that was required, after observing his method, was to be more industrious or more skillful. But no such thing; the grand requisite for doing better than one's neighbour is to have more capital than he uses. And this is the real point at issue, though it has escaped M. Thiers's notice; for it is by means of his capital that the manufacturer is enabled to realise large profits after the expenses of production, to pass through a commercial crisis, to profit by and even regulate the fluctuations in the market, and to procure the exclusive use of those mighty machines, the massive weapons by which he can unerringly annihilate his rivals. Competition, then, is not a simple struggle! it is one in which the combatants are doubly unequal, since to the inequalities of talent there are added the conventional inequalities of condition, which, by the way, is in direct opposition to the object of the institution of society, namely, to prevent the oppression that would arise in the savage state from the effect of natural inequalities. M. Thiers, in proof of the benefits derived from competition, mentions only the improvements introduced into the cotton manufactures. A panegyrist could scarcely be more modest or reserved. We, who are the declared enemies of competition, have no difficulty in acknowledging that we are indebted to it for far greater and more important benefits. Suppose we examine this subject a little; it is well worth our while, and it is a pity M. Thiers did not think of it.

Science is continually discovering new powers of nature to replace the powers of man.

The division of labour increases a hundred fold the powers of production.

The commercial restrictions that have long separated nations are gradually disappearing.

Production is ever tending to centralise its resources and activity.

Commercial relations are daily developing themselves through the extension of credit.

Now all these, and many others, the results of progress, which in a less vicious system than the present would be advantageous to all, are without exception of a character to aggravate, at least for certain periods, the position of the greater part of the labouring class.

Every new machine is a source of profit for the employer, but, in driving masses of labourers from the manufactory, deprives them of their labour, which is their property. The poor fellows who are thus introduced beside the doors of the manufactories where their fellow-workmen are employed, offer their services at a lower price, reduce wages by their eagerness for employment; and, till the balance is restored, till the influence of the machine is become beneficial by universal use, all the evil consequences of the innovation are borne by the weakest, while a few only are benefited.

The division of labour in a well regulated society, would be of undoubted advantage; yet under the present system, it tends to reduce the labourer to the lowest state of brutishness, by employing his whole life in fashioning a pin head, or in turning a wheel.

Every commercial restriction that is removed, opens the way for an influx of foreign productions and creates a commercial crisis. Who is the sufferer? Nearly always the labourer. Have not speculators often taken advantage of these times of trouble, and their cold-hearted calculations been fatally realised? If profits are diminished, wages are reduced, the mill is kept at work, and the goods stored up in warehouses. When the crisis is past, the goods fetch an easy sale, and the speculator's gains are in proportion to the losses he would have sustained, and to those which his workmen suffer from the reduction of wages. This is hard reality, can it be surpassed by fiction?

The centralisation of production, causes immense saving in labour; but then, it is compelled to extend its market indefinitely, depend upon distant consumers whose numbers it has no means of calculating, and therefore cannot accommodate itself to the fluctuations of their demands. Now, who does not see that in a war of interests such as this, the wider the market, the more frequent and fearful must be the disturbances in trade? Go and count the victims that are crushed by the ruin of any of our large manufacturing establishments!

The extension of credit, in itself, is an excellent thing. And yet how many disasters it produces in the present system of isolation and individualism! An operative who has had the good fortune to find work to support himself and family by the sweat of his brow, is suddenly reduced to misery? Whom shall he accuse? The master manufacturer? But the failure of the establishment that supported the workman was not owing to any fault of his. A manufactory may be closed in France on account of some failure in England; so a house may break in England on account of some fraudulent engagement contracted in America. In a wisely organized system of association the influence of such calamities would be greatly restricted; it would scarcely be felt, as each would bear his share, and we should not have to witness such disgraceful scenes as thousands of honest and industrious workmen dependant upon the bad faith or imprudence of some distant capitalist.

If such be the vice of the present social organization that no progressive step can be made without bringing some trouble or calamities on the people, what must be the other side of the picture?

Some people, and M. Thiers seems to be of the number, think it most prudent to conceal the public distress, and especially from those who are the greatest sufferers. They fancy that furnishing men would never be aware of their distress if others did not tell them. Most sagacious reasoning, no doubt; but we must confess, in all humility, we cannot see the wisdom of it. Our own opinion is, that when a people are driven to revolt by despair, it is from their condition having become intolerable, and not at all on account of their having read the fact in books; we do not think that all the books in the world would induce M. Thiers to think he was ill when he was enjoying good health. There are, doubtless, persons who fancy themselves ill, (*des malades imaginaires*), but were they more numerous Molière's play of '*Le malade imaginaire*' would not have met with so favourable a reception.

The danger does not lie in studying and describing the evils of society, but in deceiving ourselves and others respecting them. For in the latter case, governments are led away by a false idea of security. Relieved from a wholesome anxiety, they take no trouble to foresee, to enquire, or to act; and like those foolish persons recorded in history, they crown themselves with flowers, saying "Away with business till to-morrow," then dosing off in their delu-

sion they are suddenly roused in the midst of the hurricane. The real way to prevent revolutions and ward off catastrophes, is to probe the social wounds with a bold hand, proclaim the truth faithfully, and compel governments to keep a watchful eye upon events. This, in our opinion, would be the greatest prudence.

We have consequently no scruple in refuting the calculations on which M. Thiers complacently builds his optimism. What is required is to write the history of misery; M. Thiers has only given us the romance of it.

M. Thiers boasts that at Rouen and Lille, a weaver's wages, that were formerly, according to him, from thirty sous (1s. 3d.) a day, are now forty. Let us just open M. Boerts's work on cotton manufactures in Alsace, and we shall see what causes still in existence have produced generally a reduction of weavers' wages to sixty centimes (6d.) for a day's work of fourteen or even sixteen hours. We have had an opportunity of observing ourselves, at Troyes, the condition of the operatives, and the following is the result of a personal investigation. The number of operatives at Troyes, at the time of our visit, was from five to six hundred, receiving daily from 75 c. (7½d.) to 1½ fr. (1s. 3d.) Some few only had as much as 2 fr., but it was only by working about fourteen hours a day. That in some trades, as the hardware for instance, wages have risen, we will not deny, but in others the reduction has been considerable. It is beyond a doubt, that by a natural succession of cause and effect, as will be shewn farther on, competition tends to reduce wages. So that we find by *Marshall's Researches*, the cost of manual labour in the cotton manufactures has fallen eleven-twelfths.

At the most, M. Thiers's calculations being taken from one or two trades, there is nothing conclusive in his argument. For our own part, when we wished to make calculations on the condition of the working classes, we were not satisfied without carrying the enquiry into *all or almost all the different trades*. The results may be seen in our work on "The Organization of Labour," to which we refer the reader who desires to know how far statistics are at variance with the doctrines of M. Thiers.

Let us now compare the cost of manual labour with the cost of provisions. And here we are spared the trouble of controversy; for M. Thiers confesses that though the workman can clothe himself cheaper, his food and lodging is much more expensive; in respect to lodging, in the ratio of 90 to 120; and the price of meat has considerably increased.

We will take up this important subject of the nourishment of the people presently, and content ourselves now with stating, that according to M. Thiers's own declarations, out of the three great necessities of life,—food, shelter, and clothing,—the first two, which are the most essential, press heavier upon the workman's finances.

We have, however, not only to consider how much the labourer gains and how much he spends, but also what becomes of him when he is unable to find work. And why has M. Thiers refrained from noticing this the most terrible and afflicting view of the question? Why has he not shown us the amount of slack time in each trade? Why has he not hinted at the anguish and wretchedness that the poor labourer with a family suffers when out of employment, from bad times or sickness?

With respect to the woman's condition, M. Thiers takes care not to say a word. He has not told us that young girls of the working-class, left to their own resources, in the turmoil of large towns, have the greatest difficulty to gain a livelihood; that the competition for convent labour is so fierce and the pay so small, their best strength give way under

it; that many, unable to live without a lover, are reduced to the alternative of suffering hunger for the sake of virtue, or of offering their love for sale; and that finery in dress is, alas! with them, but too often an indication of the greatest indigence artfully disguised.

It is remarkable, that having to defend competition, M. Thiers should have taken refuge behind a few random calculations, and not dared to trust himself to argument. The reason is, that statistics, on account of the arbitrary and uncertain character of their data, have much greater pliancy than reasoning. There is much less danger of compromising oneself by a doubtful calculation than by a false argument. Let us do what M. Thiers has left undone, logically analyze the effects of competition.

Those who know anything about political economy are aware that wealth results from the balance between production and consumption. Articles that are not made use of, that is, are not consumed, represent useless labour; and all useless labour is ruinous. Now it will be easy to show that competition tends to a result contrary to the true laws of political economy; TO AN UNLIMITED INCREASE IN THE POWERS OF PRODUCTION AND A CORRESPONDING DECREASE IN THE MEANS OF CONSUMPTION.

Since in the competitive world production develops itself by mere blind chance, without calculating the obstacles that arise in the midst of a thousand conflicting accidents, the excitement of competition may well be compared to that of the gambling-table. It is the ardent pursuit of an unknown object in the dark. What an impulse it has consequently given to human cupidity! And how the passion for gain has seized upon all minds! Have we not witnessed individuals accumulating enterprise upon enterprise; and speculations started in everything that exists, and even in things that have no existence; in imaginary properties; in visionary mines; and ideas that existed only on paper? In fact, the ardour for speculation has been carried so far as to establish—see M. de Villeneuve (Christian political economy)—the most disgusting trading in the foul practices of the lowest dens of debauchery.

But it is a fearful truth, and well worth our serious consideration, that the same system that tends to widen the circle of production, by exciting the cupidity of some, tends also to contract that of consumption, by daily reducing the sources of others. In an unrestricted competitive system, how can the labourer prevent an ever-increasing multitude of hungry competitors from taking the work out of his hands and putting it up to auction? A certain branch of trade requires a hundred hands; two hundred offer themselves, six hundred, a thousand! What can he do? Lose one half his bread to preserve the other. Shall we be told that if there are too many hands at one place or trade, there are too few at another? What is that to do with it? Is it so easy for the poor man to transport his family and his wretchedness from one place to another? Or can a man change his trade as he can his country? The reduction of wages then is the direct consequence of the competitive system. Now the consumer is not actuated by cupidity, but is merely the one who has the means of satisfying a want. What means have all these labourers, whose number increases so rapidly, to purchase the articles of consumption, that our manufactories, impelled by an unrestricted competition, are constantly pouring into the market in ever varied forms, while they continually require fresh food for their operations?

And if the labourer does not receive sufficient wages for a certain amount of work, he must of course submit to work harder and longer. If he cannot get enough by his own labour, he will add



that of his wife and his children, who, thus delivered up body and soul to the demon of production, will be viewed by him merely as a means of increasing his wages. Consult the report read to the trade society of Mulhouse, May 31st, 1837, where you will find to your horror, *that children of eight years old have been compelled to pass sometimes fifteen and eighteen hours a day in the cotton-mills, with only an hour and a half respite for dinner.*

Here then, we have a vastly numerous class necessitated to produce more and more every day, and each day to consume less! It is useless to reply, that the natural effect of competition is to increase consumption by cheapness; this is true within certain limits only, namely, those which separate the salaried from the non-salaried classes; but beyond these limits it is quite another thing. We must not forget, that one effect of a cheap market is to reduce the amount of wages, and thus the labourer loses on the one hand what he would gain on the other. Our assertion, then, remains unrefuted. Now, without referring to the melancholy effect of such a result, what can be imagined more fatal, more ruinous or absurd, or more plainly contrary to all ideas of political economy? You say that the prosperity of nations lies in the balance established between production and consumption; and here we have a system under which this truly monstrous phenomenon is produced—**INCREASE OF THE POWERS OF PRODUCTION; CORRESPONDING DECREASE IN THE MEANS OF CONSUMPTION!**

And when we denounce the feverish activity given to production, let not any use our own words against us by maintaining that in this case work cannot be wanting to those who ask for it. Such is the inveterate evil of the system, that even in the midst of this unrestricted production the poor man has to run after employment, and often perishes on the road exhausted by hunger and misery. Yes! production increases faster than consumption; and what is of still more fearful import, population increases faster than production. At Paris, for instance, it has been calculated, that during a given time the births in the healthy quarters are but the 1-32nd of the population; whilst in the poor districts they are 1-26th: is it necessary to add that this increase in the poorer population makes the competition more fierce and destructive? But this is not all; the same stern contest so injurious to the employed, is carried on to an equal extent between employers.

For when a system is injurious to one part of society, it is by an admirable law of Providence injurious to all. Men can by their foolishness alter the effects of the mutual dependance which unites them, but they cannot destroy it, and if they will not have it for good, they must endure it for evil; and this is the reason why, in taking up the cause of the people, I maintain that I am acting in defence of the *bourgeoisie*. Let them worship those who flatter them and lead them to their ruin; let them proscribe and persecute with blind hatred, those who gave them salutary advice—it is the way of all who come to the possession of power; it is the way with Kings who prefer their courtiers to their friends!

I stated that competition opposes the manufacturers themselves to one another. Now this antagonism at its greatest height becomes a very war of savages. As there is not room for all, wherever you find a fortune made there also will be one ruined; and for every man who maintains his position, there will be one who is victimised. You embark in trade; very good! but where are your customers?—I shall entice my neighbour's to me. Then your neighbour will be ruined. How can I help it? Either he or I must give way. Such is the history of the commercial world in the present day!

And the *bourgeoisie* cannot see that all this leads to small fortunes being swallowed up by large ones; that it all leads direct to the ruin of little traders; that the ultimate tendency of this fine system is the vassalage of the mass of the *bourgeoisie* to a very limited oligarchy of powerful capitalists. They talk of the dangers to property! Its real dangers are those which I have here denounced. For when competition develops itself within fixed limits that are never widened, it ends in—do you know what?—universal ejection! And yet M. Thiers has the simplicity to acknowledge that, in the competitive system, the condition of the employer is deteriorated, and there is a continual depreciation in the value of capital. Undoubtedly; and for this reason we have never supposed the present social system favourable to the *bourgeoisie*. We reiterate it for the hundredth time, the *bourgeoisie* are as much interested, nay more so than the working classes, in putting an end to a state of things in which the one will be as much at a loss for the employment of their money, as the others are for the employment of their hands. Strange and ominous fact! that the separation of capital from labour should, under the influence of competition, lead to a continued depression of interest, and a systematic reduction of wages.

What remedy is there for it? None; so long as you will not substitute the principle of association for that of individualism. Try to extend the limits of the narrow market, where you are miserably devouring each other. Take courage! Cross the seas—go for consumers to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west—subdue all nations, that you may impose on them an industrial bondage, which shall render you rich and happy,—you will only succeed in putting off the evil day for a century or two. England has done all this; and I fear that the hour is not far off when the failure of her system will leave her without resources against the increasing evils of pauperism.

What is the real fact? The wider the market, the more difficult to regulate it, or foresee its fluctuations. A popular insurrection, or a serious war, is enough to open the most frightful abysses. Products, imprudently sent to unknown markets, are destroyed for want of consumers. Then, again, how can we possibly arrest production, though convinced of its madness? If it be arrested, and the manufactories closed, the workmen, reduced to despair from the fear of starvation, will seek everywhere for employment, and, by the eagerness of their demands, will lower the wages of those who still have work; a part of the fixed capital formerly employed in trade will become useless; and a part of the circulating capital destroyed. For the one, there will be risk of death—for the other, loss of capital. On the other hand, if production continues to increase more rapidly than consumption—and, for fear of losing the value of costly implements and machinery, or expensive buildings, we engage ourselves still deeper in this imprudent course, we shall only render the catastrophe more terrible by deferring the evil day; till, shortly, profits will be reduced to nothing, and wages will follow the same fate.

Thus, there will be ruin to the manufacturer—ruin to the labourer—ruin to the consumer—ruin to all.

But enough of criticism. Let us turn to the means of re-organizing society—or, we might say, the means of our salvation.

“Now,” exclaims M. Thiers, exultingly, to the Socialists, “here are your ideas—the remedies you propose.” And then, without examining them in the least, he enumerates the various systems of Socialism that have been propounded, up to the present day.

We shall leave to each of those whom M. Thiers cursorily attacks, to defend his ideas, and shall

confine ourselves to the defence of our own, beginning with a reproduction of the plan we presented at the Luxembourg, which is the following:—

"To those employers who, finding their affairs in lamentable condition, come to us and say: 'Let the State take possession of our establishments, and carry them on instead of us;' we reply: 'The State is ready to do so. You shall be amply indemnified. But our resources, at present, being unable to meet the demands you would justly make, the payment of them will be deferred to the future; and the State will grant you bills, bearing interest, and mortgaged on the value of the establishments so made over by you, which will be repayable in annuities, or redemption money.'

"Having thus arranged matters with the manufacturers, the State would next say to the workmen: 'Henceforth you will work in these manufactories as members of an association. With respect to the settlement of wages, you can choose one of two methods; but this point being settled, it will be necessary to arrange how the profits of the whole labour shall be divided.'

"After deducting wages, the interest of the capital, and the expenses of materials and repair, the surplus would be thus distributed:—

"A fourth part for the redemption of the capital belonging to the proprietor who made the original engagement with the State.

"A fourth part for the establishment of a fund to support the aged, the sick, the wounded, &c.

"A fourth part to be divided amongst the workmen as their share of the profits, in a manner to be hereafter described.

"The remaining fourth to form a reserve fund, the object of which will be stated further on.

"Such would be the constitution of an association in one manufactory.

"It remains to extend the associations to all the manufactories of the same kind, that they may be all united in mutual dependence upon each other.

"Two conditions would be sufficient. In the first place the cost price must be determined upon; and taking into consideration the present state of the industrial world, the rate of legal profits above the cost price must be fixed, so as to have one uniform price for all, and prevent competition between manufactories of the same kind.

"Next we should settle the wages in every manufactory of the same kind, in proportion to the means of obtaining subsistence in the different parts of France.

"All the manufactories of the same kind being thus bound together by a common interest, we should then have to establish the whole upon a firm basis of order, which would prevent the possibility of wars, hatreds, or revolutions, by uniting all the various trades, and all the members of society, in one bond of fellowship and mutual dependence.

"For this object, two conditions are necessary:—

"To collect all the profits of each trade, and distribute the total among the workmen.

"Next, out of the reserve fund referred to above, to form a fund of mutual assistance between the different trades, so that when any branch of trade was unfortunate, it would be assisted by those in a more prosperous condition. In this way a large capital would be accumulated that would belong to no one individually, being the common property of all.

"The disposal of this capital would be entrusted to a council of administration appointed over all the manufactories. They would have the direction of all the various trades, just as each particular trade would be placed under the superintendence of an engineer appointed by the State.

"This plan could only be fully carried out by a series of progressive measures, in order that no individual may suffer injury. The State would have its model establishment, which would not prevent the existence of private associations, or even the partial continuance of the present system. But such are the superior advantages of our system, that we are convinced it would, in a short time, be adopted by the whole of society, drawn to it by its irresistible attraction. Like the stone that is cast in the waters, it would give rise to ever-widening circles, that would extend till they embraced the whole world within their influence."

Before replying to the objections to this plan, I shall just observe that the reason why it has not been regularly tried is, because the means have never been placed at my disposal. For it should be known that the *Government Labour Commission* was established only as a Commission of Inquiry. I ENTERED THE LUXEMBOURG AND LEFT IT WITHOUT RECEIVING A FARTHING.

This is why my system still exists only in theory, and so many take advantage of my being prevented from putting it in practice to say that it is impracticable. Nevertheless, I do not fear to assert that, with half the money that has been so foolishly and wastefully squandered upon the *ateliers nationaux*, (which, by the way, were not only organized without my sanction, but for the very purpose of injuring me) it would be easy for me to silence all those who call every new idea impossible, without ever having studied it.

Let us now examine M. Thiers's objections, first quoting them word for word.

"Association!" says he; "I am sorry the author, or rather the restorer, of this idea, is not within these walls."

"M. BRIVES.—It is not his fault that he is absent."

"M. THIERS.—He has perhaps some friends here, who will at all events supply his place

"Well, gentlemen, this idea is, to say the least, chimerical; a little less wild than what is called Communism, but quite as fanciful. In all ages it has been universally acknowledged that the master's eye is the best guardian of private interests. It has been always considered that private business required all the arduous, skill, and continued application of personal interest; and now we are recommended to substitute for it—what?—why, the general interest of the community, which would be nothing less than commercial anarchy. Only imagine all the looms, iron-works, and manufactories of France under the guidance of an association of workmen, instead of being each directed by individual interest—which, even with the most extraordinary efforts and ingenuity, scarcely succeeds, not in making large fortunes, but, on the contrary, sometimes only leads to ruin and failure; and you imagine that association could perform what private interest and ingenuity have been unable to do! You have completely confounded and inverted the order of things. The real principle and true spring of action in trade is private interest and individual capacity; but in government the principle is universal, national interest;—while you, on the contrary, would make your government an association, and trade an anarchy."

M. Thiers talks very largely about the eye of the master. But why is the eye of the master so necessary? Because he alone is interested that the work be well and quickly done. Now the fact is, and M. Thiers seems to have forgotten this, that in association the eye of the master is constantly on the watch, for this simple reason, that every one being personally interested in the results, each member watches the work with the eye of a master.



M. Thiers blames us for wishing to substitute associative for private interest, *that is to say (c'est à dire)* to introduce anarchy into trade. This *c'est à dire* is capital; it reminds us of the celebrated *quoiqu'on die\** of Molière's *Femmes Savantes* (Blue Stockings.) What relation, I should like to know, is there between the words "associative interest," which convey an idea of connection, union, and discipline, and these others, "commercial anarchy," which imply disunion and disorder? We should at least have some regard to the signification of words. To declare that private interest is a powerful motive, is to maintain what no one will pretend to deny. The question is, whether private interest will not have a higher moral influence when in harmony with the general interest than when opposed to it. How did M. Thiers learn that the motive of personal interest would be destroyed when, instead of hired servants working for a master, and having: 5 interest in the results, we should have an associated body working on their own account, and therefore all deeply interested in the success of their undertakings? The principle of association does not necessarily imply that the cotton is spun, or the iron wrought, for one's country alone, but it does necessarily imply that every individual weaves, forges, or otherwise works for himself as well as for others. Far from acknowledging that the argument drawn from the force and importance of private interest is an objection to our views, we maintain that it is a strong argument against the salary system; for what motive of personal interest has the hired labourer, I should like to know? What has he besides the tyrant pangs of hunger to encourage him to labour, to make his toil attractive or, even to lighten its burden? Alas! the utmost that his foresight or care can accomplish is by dint of severe privations to save a little competence that will enable him to get through bad times without starvation, or to keep his father from the disgrace of going to the asylum. The associative system has this double advantage over the salary system, that on the one hand it satisfies the demands of personal interest, and on the other it harmonises the individual with the general interest, and purifies the one by increasing the influence of the other. You appeal to the laws of human nature on behalf of a few; we appeal to them for the advantage of all. This is the difference between us.

But to continue:—

"Besides," says M. Thiers, "if we should ever go deeply into the subject"—"I am obliged to glance rapidly over it, as I have already detained you long, and should like to come to the main point of our discussion; I do not wish to occupy too much of your time; I will merely touch lightly upon the points. If I had time, I would cite instances, in large establishments in Paris, of this wonderful association, that is to regenerate the human race, and place the working class in a prosperous and superior

\* The full force of the allusion can only be understood by reading the passage in Molière's *Femmes Savantes*, Act III. Scene 3rd. Briefly we may state, that the *quoiqu'on die* ought to be *quoiqu'on dise*, and signifies "whatever may be said;" but the point here consists in its being introduced into a piece of poetry, only for the sake of rhyme, without any reference to the preceding or succeeding words, and its being very much admired by a set of blue stockings.

The verses are addressed to a lady suffering under fever.

Votre prudence est endormie  
De traiter magnifiquement  
Et de loger superbement  
Votre plus grande ennemie,  
Faites la sortir, quoi qu'on die.

Tr.

condition; in these you would see disorder and ruin, and wages reduced through the follies of bad government. If there should be an enquiry, I will state the facts as they are, in a certain number of establishments, after three months of association, and the introduction of the associative principle, that has been substituted for the substantial principle of individual interest. Again, I repeat, you have introduced anarchy into the commercial world."

If M. Thiers here refers to the association of journeymen tailors, and that of journeymen saddlers, which owe their existence to the *Government Labour Commission*, we join him in the cry for an enquiry; for it will add the evidence of facts to that of reasoning, and will show that the saddlers' association was rapidly improving, and is now on the high road to prosperity; that the tailors' association, though commenced under very unfavourable conditions, and the object of a system of calumny and slander, made a considerable advance, completed several important orders, realized no mean profits, and showed how valuable is the practice of fraternal union to maintain order and activity in business. Yes, let an enquiry be set on foot at once.

"In society," continues M. Thiers, "every one can speculate with his own capital. In association, where will you get the capital? In the public treasury? I will tell you what that is presently. If it were the treasury of the rich man, very good; if it were the united capital of all trades, it would come to just nothing at all, for it would be everybody lending everybody the means of speculation with themselves: but the fact is, you only look to a single class, those who are brought together in large towns, and are, unfortunately, but involuntarily, too often instruments in the hands of others for disturbances and revolts: for association is not adapted to agriculture, nor to the great number of domestic servants; it is only adapted to the operatives in large manufactories, mines, cotton-mills, or iron works; these are the men you refer to.

"Now, only consider, in the case of new inventions, while each individual speculates with his own capital, one class alone, numbering perhaps 1,000,000 out of 36,000,000, will speculate with the capital of all; and their speculations, being founded upon a wrong principle, can end only in ruin.

"But this has been guarded against, by wishing to suppress competition; when that shall have ceased, association will regulate the prices; instead of the unrestricted prices that flow from free-trade dealings, and to which we owe all the progress we have made, we shall have a monopoly for the benefit of a single class, only 1,000,000 out of 36,000,000. Such is a true picture of association: it is a false principle."

Here we see that M. Thiers will not venture to object to the State interfering in matters of credit. But what does he? He makes the most ungaranteed supposition that we have to do with a class only, viz., those collected together in towns. With as the greatest coolness "Association is ill suited to agriculture;" and on this assertion rests all that he says about the monopoly, which, according to him, we would establish for the benefit of a single class. Indeed! we beg M. Thiers's pardon, but his whole argument is based on an error in fact, and that a most palpable one. If he would have taken the trouble to examine the labours of the Luxembourg Commission, he would have seen in the *Moniteur* a plan for the establishment of agricultural colonies set forth with great clearness and precision by M. Vidal, the Secretary-General of that Commission, and he would have been satisfied that far from wishing to restrict the application of our views to towns, we look upon agricultural association as the natural and indispensable complement of industrial association.



We shall not require a very lengthened explanation to show how false is the assertion of M. Thiers that association is not suited to agriculture. Whenever the amount of population in a country tends to be greater than subsistence can be provided for, that country is hastening to ruin. Now, if we reflect that on the one hand, according to Euler, the population may double itself in eleven years under the 50th deg. of lat., and on the other that there is a fatal limit to the fertility of the soil when brought to the highest state of cultivation, we shall easily understand with what solicitude real statesmen must watch over the progress of agriculture.

Yet what is the case in France? The result of the laws of inheritance in the Civil Code has been, as everybody knows, the cause of an almost infinite subdivision of landed property, and the abandonment of agricultural labour to individualism—that is to say, to a system of petty cultivation. What have been the consequences? We will just state the facts before we enter upon an explanation of them.

A learned statistician, M. Rubichon, in 1837 drew up, from a report presented to the Academy by MM. Daubenton, Laplace, Bailly, and Darcet, and from documents published every year in the Almanac of the Longitude Office, a table of the consumption of food in twenty of the most populous towns of France that begin with an A. Well, the result of these calculations is, that every ten years the number of consumers increases 6 per cent., whilst the materials of consumption in animal food diminish 8 per cent. The same author adds to the preceding table, one showing the quantity that each individual in Paris falls short of in the different articles of consumption:—

In game, poultry, butter, and eggs.....	10 per cent.
— Wine.....	25 —
— Farinaceous food or bread.....	33 —
— Cheese.....	40 —
— Beer.....	40 —
— Brandy.....	47 —

We are well aware that statements furnished by statistics are open to controversy, yet we willingly give credence to calculations that were tried and confirmed by arguments which, in this case, ascertain beyond a doubt that with respect to agriculture subdivision of property leads to deterioration and ruin. The flesh of oxen and sheep serving as food for man, their coats as his clothing, and their litter containing the generative principle of vegetation, it is very evident that our success in the cultivation of the vegetable kingdom, or, in other words, of grain, garden stuffs, and fruits, depends upon our success in the breed of cattle. The best system of agriculture is that which admits of farming large pastures and extensive meadowland, of breeding numerous flocks and herds, of increasing, in fact, that valuable manure which contains the elements of reproduction. "It is sufficient to show how injurious must be the effect of a system of petty cultivation, which in its very essence is opposed to the development of the animal kingdom, the most important of all, as that which contains within it the very essence of the soil. This system of petty cultivation tends to substitute small enclosures for extensive pastures; the culture of grain, which exhausts the soil, for the breeding of cattle, which vivifies it; the spade, which wastes the strength of man, for the plough, which husband it. It is irreconcilable with the employment of large capital and the application of new methods. To the man who is capable of superintending a whole herd it gives but a cow to look after. It prevents the erection of extensive buildings in the centre of the farm, and banishing the labourer to the villages, it keeps the cultivator at a distance from the site of his labour. It causes the greater number of inheritances to be divided into miserable scraps of

land, often at inconvenient distances from each other. It covers the country with hedges, that render a large proportion of it useless. It prevents the agriculturist from contriving and varying his labours according to the situation of the place and the quality of the soil. In fine, it is such a fertile source of ruin that the mortgages in France at present amount to more than 13 millions, which is as much as to say that those who have the least claim upon the soil are really the proprietors of it themselves. Things are come to such a pass that the only way to prevent the ultimate subdivision of the land is a general expropriation to the advantage of the usurers. But what usury might recombine to-day the Civil Code would very shortly subdivide again; and during this singular struggle between usury and the Civil Code, agriculture would go to ruin. The quantity of materials for consumption increases much slower than the population; a portion of the people fall short of their proper nourishment; another portion, after being accustomed to animal food, are reduced to bread and butter, from this to potatoes, and thus society gradually approaches to the realms of famine, that scourge which includes all other scourges in its capacious maw! Who would dare now to think of reconstructing property on the feudal system? Or who could believe it possible to bring back property under a monarchical tenure, or have it cultivated on a large scale by ecclesiastical corporations? There is then but one method of re-establishing a system of cultivation on a large scale—there is but one mode of placing the science of agriculture in harmony with an increasing number of proprietors—and that is by association.

Nor is there a single Socialist system that is not based upon agricultural association. Fourier, Victor, Considérant, Pierre Leroux, Vidal, Peiqueur, Cabet, Villegardelle, all the Socialists agree upon this point, whatever may be the differences of their formulas or their economical arrangements. Such are the facts that M. Thiers might have known, if he had given himself the trouble to read the doctrines which he has taken so much pains to refute. Henceforth, what becomes of his famous objection, founded upon the injustice and dangers of a monopoly *created for the advantage of a single class, the operatives in towns, and at the expense of the public treasure?* With respect to the fears expressed by M. Thiers, of no longer seeing competition regulating prices, we beg to observe that, as competition determines the selling price—not according to the real value of the article, not according to a scientific ratio founded on a statement of the cost price, but according to perpetual variations in the markets, the fickleness of fashion, the selfish calculations and cunning artifices of speculation—what M. Thiers calls a regulated system we call anarchy. We beg to observe, also, that it is only by association, and by association founded on a mutual dependence of all kinds of industry, that we can arrive at a scientific and radical settlement of prices, so as to destroy monopoly at its source. For, in political economy, competition leads to monopoly; just as, in politics, license ends in tyranny.

I now come to the question of the Right to Labour.

M. Thiers resolutely denies the right to labour. However, he deigns to acknowledge the right to assistance. Really, to confess the truth, we do not believe that a more extraordinary contradiction was ever uttered. Upon what principle does the right to assistance rest, if it be not that every man, at his birth, received from God the right to live? And this is the very principle which establishes the right to labour. If a man has a right to live, he must necessarily have a right to the means of preserving that



life. What is this means? Why, labour. To admit the right to assistance, and deny the right to labour, is to acknowledge that man may claim to live unproductively, and deny his claim to live productively; it is to sanction his existence as a useless burden, and refuse to sanction it as a state of useful activity, which is utterly absurd. One of two things must be granted: either the right to assistance is a meaningless phrase, or the right to labour must be incontestably admitted. We defy any one to get out of this dilemma. Nothing can be hollower than M. Thiers's reasoning on this most serious and solemn question. His whole argument lies in assuming—

That eleemosynary charity is not humiliating. That the right to labour, once acknowledged, would necessarily lead to a second experiment like the *Ateliers Nationaux*, in which, after all, the pretended labour was but assistance under another name. That legalising the right to labour would furnish a pretext for rebellion, and arm the sovereign people with another Article 14. That to carry out this right into practice, we require an increase of taxation, and that this increase is impossible. Let us examine these points *seriatim*:—

Charity is not humiliating? Certainly not, when offered to those who demand it as a right, and are really in want of it. But to offer alms to those who only ask to be put in the way to do without them—this is what makes it humiliating. The people never err on this point. They readily accept almshouses for the aged, hospitals for the sick, and asylums for the insane; but what they will not admit is, that we should reduce to the level of beggars men who, with sound minds and bodies, only ask the means to gain an honest livelihood. Assistance is an insult to the man who feels that he is able to help himself. Should any one, perchance, offer alms to M. Thiers in the street, I am quite sure he would blush with indignation.

M. Thiers asks, what would the State do if the right to labour were acknowledged?—and hastens to reply, "What it did in the *Ateliers Nationaux*, give them day-work." Indeed! The State would do so? And who told you that, Sir? I tell you, the State would do no such thing, had it ever so little wisdom, ever so little care for the dignity of the people or the interests of the Treasury; were it ever so little capable or disposed to put in practice these doctrines which you are opposing.

For you must know there is not a single Socialist who would approve of the proceedings in the *Ateliers Nationaux*. As for us, we have not, thank God! to reproach ourselves either with having proposed or approved of them. Instead of assembling indiscriminately an immense mass of workmen, without consideration of their respective professions, without any bond of union between them, and condemning them all to a monotonous useless labour, utterly foreign to their previous habits; we would have first ascertained how in each *corps d'état* there might be formed the nucleus of an association so constituted as to develop itself continually by successive additions in proportion to the amount of works to be executed, and in accordance with a principle that would have been admitted by every member of the association: viz, "Every man should have his place in the field of labour, as he has in the light of the sun; and it is better to gain a little less, if necessary, than to let one of our brothers die of hunger at our very doors." Now in this there would be neither source of ruin nor alms in disguise, neither a pretence of work nor cause for humiliation to any one.

"But," says M. Thiers, "if we had the imprudence to grant this right to labour, might not the people,

some fine day, come with arms in their hands and claim it?" Certainly not, for there would be no occasion to claim it if proper measures were taken to carry it out. Machiavel says: "When a people revolt, it is always the fault of the government against which they rise." And, I tell you, it matters little whether this right to labour, the most sacred of all rights, be written on paper or parchment; it will ever remain engraven on the public mind in imperishable characters.

But the taxes? How shall we increase the taxes? So M. Thiers pretends ignorance of the fact that loans are ever attendant upon taxes. He pretends to be ignorant that a loan is the very means by which we make the future pay its share of the burdens of the present! If a war breaks out, the government raises a loan; and cannot the same means be employed for increasing production which is used for organizing destruction, or, if you prefer it, the defence of the country? Nor must we forget that war seldom repays what it costs, whilst labour almost always returns an interest upon the capital spent on it. By a careful examination of the system we propose, it will be seen that it possesses such a power of elasticity, as would admit of our commencing on the smallest scale that might be thought desirable. The main point would be to set it in motion, and it would afterwards develop itself by the sole power of its own fundamental principle. Thus M. Thiers's last objection falls to the ground. The taxes, indeed! why the surest method of increasing their sources, would be to establish a better order of things altogether, and thus increase the general wealth. Now, it is important to keep in mind that the associative principle has this superior excellence, that it not only creates a more equitable distribution, but it increases a hundred fold the amount of production.

We shall say no more. M. Thiers is so weak on the labour question, that it requires no further argument. Besides, this is no time for lengthy reasoning; an invisible hand is hastening as it were the course of the hours; events are accumulating, and facts outstrip our thoughts. It is enough that we have denounced the fatal imprudence of those pretended statesmen who find it easier to mystify than to solve problems that can no longer be postponed, but which they have yet to study. Insensate fools, of whom the impending tempest gives no salutary warning! Blind idiots, who dream in the very midst of the surrounding peril, like the birds that are seen cradled in the storm, and sleeping on the northern blast! Yet some ask us why we moot such questions. Why? Because the workings of the human mind present at certain epochs phases that it is absolutely necessary we should examine. Why? Because the intellectual equally as the physical world has its peculiar laws; and it is as impossible to stop the progress of an idea whose hour of birth has struck, as it would be to stop the earth in its course round the sun. But, good God! these questions that appear so formidable to you are not the creation of individual brains. Time itself has begotten them. Questions such as these derive not their origin from human thoughts, they are the offspring of the age; and do what you will, the 19th century will ever remain the century of Socialism!

Can men, then, keep silence when events speak trumpet-tongued? It is folly to imagine it. The danger did not lie in giving utterance to the wants of the age, in formularising and affording a field for the expression of ideas which agitated the minds of the people, as is evident from the profound calmness and quiet enthusiasm that marked the immortal months of March and April—when we, who are now accused, who are now the victims of pros-

scription, (that iniquitous instrument of vulgar minds), required for the maintenance of order neither the decrees of a state of siege indefinitely prolonged, nor to stop the mouths of those who spoke against us—to suspend the laws or lay an interdict upon liberty—to substitute the sword for the balance of justice; to send for soldiers and cannon from the distant provinces, or insult the capital of an enlightened nation by placing it under the rule of a pretorian guard—in one word, we were not obliged to imprison the city of Paris. During the months of March and April, it is well known that we were able to abolish the penalty of death with safety; no one was arrested; it was a pleasure to forget how, in former times, runaway kings were pursued by their irritated subjects. The magnanimity of the people triumphed in the summit of their power, whose source was in themselves. The press enjoyed an unexampled and unrestricted liberty; and the soldiers approached their fellow citizens only to embrace them. And then what lofty impulses! What an imposing sight was that of the 17th March, when the people showed themselves in all the majesty of their disinterestedness and might! And how affecting was that *fête* of fraternity, when but one cry was raised to heaven, one single shout; for that responded to the pulsations of every heart in Paris! But how were things changed in the succeeding months! History will draw the parallel; and we appeal to history.

A few words more. Is it true or false, that, for the last half-century, society has been plunging from crisis to crisis, from revolution to revolution? That revolts from below have been the sole remedy for oppression from above? That we have been ever compelled to tremble between the fear of a 10th of Aug. or an 18th Brumaire? That ambition has

been the sole motive in the political, and cupidity in the industrial world? That the greater number suffer in the present, and the more fortunate dread the future; while the misery of one class produces fear in the other? Is it true, also, that a family is the best type of association; and that we should consequently take it as our model, and endeavour to arrange society on the same principle as that of a family, viz., a mutual dependence of common interests (*la solidarité des intérêts*)?

If all this be incontestible, it is in vain to calumniate the Socialists, to distort their doctrines, or say that their views lead to bloodshed: you will never put down the idea which they represent. I venture even to predict that those very persons who now attack them will soon be compelled, by the force of events, to deck themselves in their spoils, and the Socialists will have their enemies for plagiarists. As for persecution, it will not defer the ultimate result for one single day; but, on the contrary, hasten it, by extinguishing all that has but little importance, and enhancing that which has much; as the wind which blows out the torch, but makes the fire burn more fiercely.

Let the men at the head of affairs in France think well of this. Governments are not established to arrest society, but to lead it in its onward course. Hitherto Governments have considered themselves the opposing force; it is high time they should look upon themselves as the motive power; and on this subject we will repeat our definition of a Republican Government, given at the Luxembourg:—"Power is a union of men of worth and intelligence, elected by their equals, to give a right direction to the progress of man towards liberty."

LOUIS BLANC.

## PLAN OF AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION PROPOSED BY THE LUXEMBOURG COMMISSION.

Behold the arrival of the hour for coming to a settlement with distress, and considering measures of a remedial and restorative tendency. The sacred standard around which the people rally is inscribed with three words which no hand will henceforth efface, for the realization of this motto is brought about by the restless course of events—these words are, "Liberty, equality, and fraternity."

Now, two great forms or combinations seemed destined to envelope, in a way, the new civil and social relations of mankind; two great ideas, necessary corollaries of the sentiments of equality and fraternity, alone possess the power in the present day of reconstructing and enriching—on the one side association, the principle of all strength and all economy; on the other, the disinterested intervention of the state—the principle of all order, all distributive justice, and all unity.

We have sufficiently detailed the benefits conferred by the principle of association; those benefits legalize its accession, which we announce to you. As to the state, it is clear that, if it has any social duty, it is to interfere as a peaceful protector: wherever there are rights to adjust and interests to guarantee; it is to place all citizens in equal conditions of moral, intellectual, and physical development. This is its law; and it can only accomplish this law by reserving to itself the right of distributing credit, of furnishing implements of labour to those who want them, in such a manner as to render the living sources of

wealth accessible to all. Take away this economical attribute—take away all foresight from the State—we mean the State as democratically constituted—and the organisation of labour becomes a lie, and the intolerable miseries of the people must remain for ever without a remedy.

These principles will have no efficacy unless applied to every sphere of social activity, to every order of labour and interests. If a vast *ensemble* of measures and combinations, conceived in this spirit of unity, do not simultaneously and progressively transform agriculture, trade, and commerce—if the legislator and the political economist, in their views of the future, do not lend equal attention to the production, the distribution, and the completion of wealth—if they do not at once harmonize the mode and the laws—if they neglect to introduce mutual dependence and reciprocity between occupations and between persons—all is compromised and perilled, because all is subjected anew to contradiction, to two-fold employment, to antipathy, and to war.

We have already, after having shown you what motives induced us to pronounce the downfall of the system of a *liberticide laissez faire* to substitute for antagonism and isolation the principle of union and mutual dependence, laid before you a sketch of the plan for the organization of labour in the workshops of manufacturing industry, and we have even pointed out how, by the construction of a few vast edifices—i.e., by a single and intelligent architectural arrange-



ment—it would be possible to realize a large saving in the consumption of the working classes, without disturbing any interest.

But we must go further; we never dreamt of confining within such narrow limits the complex problem of the organization of labour.

In fact, are not competition, confusion, and disorder everywhere prevalent in town and country—in the farm and the shop, as well as in the factory? Do they not weigh down every age and sex—do they not oppress women and children, quite as much as men and adults? Then the agricultural social workshop, and the workshop of exchange, sale, or purchase, ought to be organized simultaneously with the industrial social workshop.

The commencement of the great work is pointed out to us by the very circumstances in which we are at present placed. Everybody must be struck by two great facts, which are aggravated in proportion to our advance—by a twofold tendency, which at once menaces us with the repletion and the pauperism—the too much and the too little—of the state of society in England. Disaster devastates the ranks of the masters, and idleness saps the energies of the people; in many workshops labour is wholly suspended, and a large number of operatives, unclassified and floating, remain excluded from the labours of the nation.

Every day we are visited by the heads of all sorts of establishments, who come to abandon to us their labour, requesting us to substitute the agency of the State for their own, in order to save the wages of their numerous *employées*. As to the unemployed operatives, they rush to us in crowds.

A merciless necessity, therefore, is about to bend the will of the legislature; wants so imperious must be satisfied.

1. The State ought to stop, or at least to diminish the disasters of private trade, to save the masters by purchasing their implements whenever it may be convenient so to do, and when they themselves make the offer. The State ought also to save the operatives by husbanding the means of continuing their labours. This is the twofold object which we proposed to attain in elaborating the plan of social workshops for trade, to which we have already drawn your attention.

2. The State ought to create new centres of labour and production, to which all the unclassed, unoccupied, and necessitous portion of the population may be admitted immediately, and find prosperity, security, dignity, and liberty. In order to meet this pressing necessity, we propose, as a measure already in principle adopted, the redemption of the railroads, canals, and mines, in order that they may be immediately transformed into social workshops, into dockyards of the Republic.

With the same object in view, we propose the creation of agricultural workshops in different parts of the French territories, where the surplus population of the towns may find an outlet.

We propose *entrepôts* and bazaars, with the object of regulating exchanges, of introducing truth and sincerity into business transactions, of simplifying the circulation, and reducing the expenses of trade, of establishing industrial credit on new bases, and of rendering the use of paper money general.

3. The State ought to insure the financial resources of all these establishments, to found a system of territorial and commercial credit, and for this purpose to decree an *ensemble* of institutions or economical combinations corresponding with the exigencies of an unprecedented state of things.

We consequently propose to transform the system of banks and assurances into national institutions; to

appropriate to the special budget of the organization of labour all the profits accruing from the creation of the bazaars and *entrepôts*, with the economy of which you will soon be made acquainted.

We also propose a project for the organization of territorial credit, according to which mortgage debt may be redeemed and capital placed at the disposal of the agriculturists on reasonable terms.

Other practical conceptions, which we are elaborating, especially that of a unique tax, will complete this *ensemble* of measures destined to serve as means of transition from the old to the new order of things; for it is not our business to make a *tibula rasa* of the vestiges of a long past in one moment, but in a manner to engraft the future on the present.

To sum up, we submit to discussion two very distinct orders of measures—on the one hand, social workshops of agriculture and trade, to be organized on the new bases of association and mutual dependence; and, on the other, institutions to be founded, modified, or transformed.

And, first, we will develop our ideas respecting the agricultural workshops, the commercial bazaar and *entrepôts*, the unitarian organization of assurances and the national or State banks to be established throughout the Republic.

#### I. AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture offers to labour a vast and fruitful field—a field almost unlimited. Agriculture permits the constant apportionment of production to the wants and the resources of consumption—it offers to labourers a permanent occupation and certain remuneration. A full development may be given to agriculture without any fear of adding to the accumulation of markets or depreciating produce—without any fear of ruining neighbouring workshops, and displacing, instead of succouring distress—without fear of throwing upon the streets poor labourers employed elsewhere, or lowering the rate of wages.

The cultivator lives on the soil, on the produce of the soil, and has no need of purchasers. His existence does not depend, like that of the operative, on the vicissitudes of commerce, chance, political crises, the closing up of a distant outlet, or an unforeseen catastrophe.

The operative employed in trade can only live on condition of finding an outlet for his produce; whereas agricultural produce, strictly speaking, may be consumed by the producers themselves.

Agriculture is favourable to the health and the morality of the labourers; it enables them to vary their toils—to develop their activity and intelligence in the open air, surrounded by the splendour of nature.

Manufacturing industry, on the contrary, accumulates human beings in towns by thousands, in filthy and unhealthy houses, in which men, women and children pine away and perish for want of light and air; it exhausts the operatives by the excess of a monotonous labour; it devotes them to misery, immorality, and, too often, to premature death.

France is certainly not over-populated, but the population is very badly distributed. A better distribution must be effected; the desert tracts of land in the country must be peopled with the surplus population of the towns; the majority of labourers must make an influx into the fields, and be employed in the work of husbandry; the superabundant population of the manufacturing towns must be allured to these agricultural colonies. The inevitable result of the voluntary emigration of a certain number of labourers would be the amelioration of the condition of the urban operatives, the diminution of the number of the unemployed, the absorption of a part of

the labour offered, the consequent abolition of the system of underselling between starving competitors, and the raising of the prices of manufacture or the rate of wages.

Agricultural working depôts or colonies must be created.

We propose the foundation in each department of social agricultural *ateliers*, placed under the direction of the State.

These establishments would be theoretical and practical schools of agriculture; they would guarantee to every labourer not only the right to work, but also the right to the implements of labour and the fruits of toil, the right to education, the free development of the faculties, and the sweets of existence.

A sum of 100,000,000*f.* would be appropriated to this special purpose. This sum would not be raised by loan or taken from the normal budget or the ordinary receipts; they would not be levied upon the taxpayers by means of increased imposts. They would be furnished by new sources of public revenue—fruitful sources which only require to be drawn upon. We will inform you presently how, without adding to the charges which now burden the citizens, but rendering real services to society at the same time, the State might increase the annual receipts of the national treasury by several hundreds of millions.

These colonies, in our opinion, ought to be organized in the following manner:—

A credit of 100,000,000*f.*, destined for the establishment of agricultural colonies, would be placed at the disposal of the State. These colonies would be the property of the nation.

In the first instance, one colony would be created in each department, with power to increase the number, if necessary. Each colony ought to be composed of about 100 families.

Each colony would be directed by an agronomist, who would represent the State, and command and superintend the labourers. This director would choose his principal assistants, and form his squadron of *contre-maitres*.

When the colony was in full activity, and the inhabitants had had time to form an acquaintance with each other, the *contre-maitres* would be chosen by the director from the candidates designated by the colonists themselves.

One-third, at least, of the *personnel* of the colony would be composed of cultivators, another third of mechanics whose labours are necessary to agriculture—such as smiths, wheelwrights, masons, joiners, carpenters, locksmiths, tailors, shoemakers, wooden shoemakers, harness-makers, and farriers; finally, the last third would consist of manufacturing operatives taken from the towns.

The qualification for admission would be the knowledge of a trade and indisputable probity and morality. The preference would be given to the largest and poorest families.

The director would decide upon admissions in the first instance; but as soon as the *personnel* of the colony was partially formed, none would be admitted without the concurrence of the committee of management.

This committee of management, composed of 15 members elected by the colonists at large, would deliberate on all the interests of the association, and superintend the carrying on of its affairs under the presidency of the director.

The committee would also decree exclusions, but only after formal inquiry and judicial sentence signed by two-thirds of the members.

The colonies would be subject to the unitarian system, and the principle of culture by associated families.

The colonists would be lodged in one vast edifice,

divided into as many separate apartments as there might be families. Each family would have a spacious and commodious lodging, clean, salubrious, well warmed and lighted, the whole for a very moderate rent; for everybody knows that the construction of a vast edifice, calculated to lodge 100 families, costs less than 100 isolated houses.

There would also be common halls, rooms for meeting and reading, a library, books, journals, all the convenience met with in towns, all that facilitates intercourse and renders life attractive. There would be an economical kitchen, where alimentary substances would be prepared and sold at cost price; there would even be lavatories and common wash-houses.

In this manner the colonists would enjoy all the advantages of aggregate and social life, and all the savings of which consumption on a large scale permits the realization, and nevertheless every one could have his home, his domestic fire-side, his interior, where he might isolate himself and cut himself off from all communication, as if in inviolable sanctuary.

Speculation amongst associates is prohibited. There would be neither shops nor merchants in the colony. All the provisions would be purchased wholesale by the managing committee, and sold at cost price.

For the establishment of these colonies waste lands belonging to the communes may be purchased.

Lands may be tilled, ponds drained, marshes rendered salubrious, and new territories conquered for cultivation.

Private property may be bought and, if necessary, the law of expropriation appealed to, for the colonies are in the highest degree establishments of public utility.

A large domain may be taken, already furnished with a suitable habitation and agricultural implements, &c. There are still chateaux in France which the owners would willingly give up to the State, and old feudal lands which might become magnificent colonies.

By cultivating waste lands susceptible of fertility—lands the saleable value of which is now insignificant—the colonists would be placed in the most favourable conditions, and the surface of the cultivated soil would be increased.

The colonists would combine agricultural with industrial labours, but agriculture would be the fundamental basis. Even now this combination has become a necessity both to agriculture and to trade, a question of prosperity or decay, of life or death. Thanks to this combination, every one might change his occupation, and find rest from the toil of the workshop in the recreation of field labours, *vice versa*. Besides, in order to realise the abundance of all things, we must be able to turn to account all available forces of the time and of the physical power which sometimes agriculture and sometimes trade cease to require.

When there is no work going on in the fields—when the season is unfavourable, during frost, rain, and snow, during the intense heats of summer and the long nights of winter—great activity may be applied to mechanics. When, on the contrary, seed-time or harvest requires, at a given moment, the simultaneous co-operation of a large number of labourers, the works of the factory would be suspended, and the cultivation of the fields exclusively attended to. This would be a faithful marriage of agriculture and trade.

#### CONDITIONS OF ASSOCIATION.

The colonists are to be mutually dependent. They are to be associated for agricultural and industrial labours, and the profits to be divided are to consist of the produce of the two occupations combined.



In the first instance, the wages of labour will be levied on the gross produce of the colony. These wages will be uniform for labourers of the same class, but they may be several different categories.

The Council of Administration appointed by the colonists, and presided over by the Director, will determine the various categories and fix the rate of wages for each.

The wages will be paid weekly; but, exclusive of these fixed wages, all the associates will have a right to a share of the profits.

In fixing the rate of wages, the average actual rate of every profession and every district will be assumed as the basis of the *minimum*.

This average rate, taken as the *minimum* on one side, the savings realized in the expenditure by consumption on a large scale on the other, and, finally the right to a division or a fraction of the profits, will immediately better the condition of the labourers in a very remarkable manner.

The *minimum* of wages will be guaranteed, in every case, by the reserve fund, to which we are about to allude.

After the deduction of the amount of the wages, the expenses (whatever they may be) of the operations, and the charges of keeping materials in repair, &c., will be levied on the gross produce; and, lastly, interest at 3 per cent. on all the capital invested for the profit of the State. These expenses and interest will form part of the annual expenses, and be placed to the debit of the association.

The colonists will thus pay an annual interest of 3 per cent. to the State on all the capital cost of the colony.

The surplus of gross produce will form the net produce or profit.

This profit will be thus divided:—

1. One-fourth will be levied for the profit of the State, to serve to found new colonies (special appropriation).

2. Another portion will be devoted to the formation of a fund for the maintenance of the aged and the sick of the colony. Out of this fund the physicians will be paid, and the expenses of pharmacy and infirmaries, &c., defrayed. All these expenses will be supported by the association.

3. Another fourth part will serve to form a reserve fund, appropriated to the realization of a mutual dependence among the different colonists, and all the social *ateliers* of the Republic. In this manner the workshops or colonies, reduced one year to a state of distress, may be succoured by the more prosperous.

This reserve fund, formed by a retention of one-fourth of the profits of all the colonies and *ateliers*, will soon form a considerable capital, which will belong to nobody in particular, but to all collectively.

The reserve fund of all the *ateliers* of France will be confided, under the surveillance of the State, to a superior council of administration, which, in contingent cases, will have to distribute relief, and, moreover, to employ the aggregate capital.

4. Finally, the last fourth of the profits will be appropriated to the colonists, and divided amongst them in proportion to the number of days' labour an-

nually performed by each associate; all working days being considered equivalent.

Women and children of both sexes, who may have worked in the colony, will have a right to participate in the profits.

Now, as in the industrial agricultural *ateliers*, advantage may be taken of the weakest powers and the most limited understandings, the father of a numerous family will not have, as now, to support alone the expenses of house-keeping. On the other hand, the asylum, the *crèche*, and the gratuitous school will take charge of infantine education, and the colony will provide for the expenses entailed by sickness, and the maintenance of invalids and aged persons from the relief fund.

To these colonies may be annexed establishments, which will become certain causes of prosperity and fruitful sources of income—

1. An agricultural school, to which will be admitted pupils paying annual stipends, and bursars maintained at the expense of the State, the departments, and the commune; the professors will naturally be paid out of the budget of Public Instruction; the children of the colony will be admitted to the courses gratis.

2. Asylums to be founded for the incapacitated labourer; houses of retreat for aged persons of both sexes.

3. The charitable establishments now situate in the centre of towns, and which would be far better placed in the country, where they would entail less expense, and where the *pensionnaires* would lead a happier life, at the same time that they might make themselves useful in gardening operations.

4. Orphan and foundling asylums.

The children will be brought up as cultivators of the soil.

As living is cheaper in the country, it will be the interest of the State, the departments, and the communes, which support the expenses of these charitable institutions, to come to an understanding with the management of the colony, and they may thus reduce the civil list of distress, or extend their relief to a larger number of unfortunates.

If the invalids, the infirm, the aged, the indigent, and the fatherless, maintained at great expense in the towns, were transferred to the colonies, the latter would be furnished with consumers for their commodities and their manufactured produce, and the soil would be enriched with the manure which a numerous population would supply.

According to our idea, relations of the closest mutual dependence ought to be entertained between the different colonies, as well as between all the workshops placed under State supervision. These workshops would naturally become customers of each other, and regulate the exchanges of commodities amongst themselves.

Each would produce, in preference, the article in the production of which it most excelled, either by reason of the nature of the soil, or its geographical site, or the superior qualifications of the people. The State, as supreme director, will combine and distribute the labour, distribute the orders, and maintain the equilibrium of production and consumption.

# NORTH TEXAN COLONIZATION COMPANY.

**M**ANY Friends in the Country have requested to know what progress the Company is making. I am enabled to inform them that it progresses rapidly. We now number Members in almost every Town in the Manufacturing Districts of England; and in London our success, considering the limited period during which the undertaking has been before the public, has far exceeded our expectations. District Groups are formed and in process of formation in very many places, and arrangements are nearly completed for a Course of Lectures throughout the Provinces, upon the Capabilities of Texas, and its Advantages for Colonization. I have been frequently asked how District Groups can be formed in remote localities. The mode is exceedingly simple. Supposing ten or any other number of persons to form themselves into a group, with a view to migration. They meet, in the first instance, and after electing their Collector and Treasurer, they subscribe towards the 10s. deposit, and when the Local Secretary has received the required amount for the entrance of each, it is paid over to the General Secretary, and scrip is received for the same. The weekly subscriptions can be collected in remote localities in the pamphlet published by the Company. This pamphlet, entitled,

## TEXAS, ITS RESOURCES, CLIMATE, AND ADVANTAGES FOR COLONIZATION,

can be obtained of any of the Agents of the SPIRIT OF THE AGE Newspaper, at the trifling cost of a penny. It gives copious extracts from the works of authors who had the best opportunities of ascertaining the character of Texas, and the intending Emigrant will find in its unpretending pages a mass of information which is not often to be had in such bulkier volumes.

Metropolitan Groups are formed at the following places—  
St. Pancras District.. Mr. Ellis's School Room, 8, George-street. Mr. Ellis, Secretary. Meeting night, Monday, 8 p.m.  
Charing Cross District.. Carpenters' Hall, Progression office House, Ryder's Court, Leicester-square. Mr. Moyler, Secretary. Meeting night, Monday, 8 p.m.  
Southwark District.. Educational Institute, King's Court, Great Suffolk-street. Mr. Vicary, Secretary. Meeting night, Tuesday, 8 p.m.  
City Road District.. Hall of Science, City Road. Mr. Randall. Meeting time, Sunday, half past 3 p.m.

Information will be readily supplied to intending Emigrants to Texas at the above places on the evenings of meeting.

All Subscribers, or persons desirous of becoming so, who may wish to go out as Pioneers, are requested to send in their names, trades or professions, age, if with families the number of children, and amount they are prepared to pay towards their allotments. It is the intention of the Company to send, if possible, about twenty Pioneers out with their Agent, who is expected to leave England about the end of November, or beginning of the succeeding month.

JOHN CAMERON, Secretary.

Applications for allotments, accompanied with a deposit of 10s. per allotment, to be made to the Office of the NORTH TEXAN COLONIZATION COMPANY, 10, Bolt Court, Fleet Street. No further subscription will be called for, till the arrangements now in progress are completed, for sending the Company's Agent to select the site for the first Colony, who will be instructed to prepare a full Report upon the subject.

Parties applying for allotments, are requested to state whether they intend belonging to the Co-operative or Individual Sections, in order that the measures of the Company may be taken accordingly.

29th Sept. 1848. JOHN CAMERON, Sec.  
(Form of application for Allotments, printed copies of which, with a Prospectus, may be had at the Company's Office, No. 10, Bolt Court, Fleet-street, London; or sent by post, on the receipt of two Postage Stamps.)

To the Trustees of the North Texan Colonization Company. Gentlemen,—Please allot to me \_\_\_\_\_ acres of the [individual or co-operative] section of the land which W. S. Peters has agreed to convey to you, in the State of Texas, North America. For which I hereby agree to pay you according to the terms of your prospectus. I am Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Profession \_\_\_\_\_  
Residence \_\_\_\_\_

day of \_\_\_\_\_

Let the reader, having read the published description of Texas, with the detail of advantages offered in the prospectus of the NORTH TEXAN COLONIZATION COMPANY, contrast it with the subjoined account of the El-Dorado of the Government and other Emigration schemes. It is an extract from the letter of a person who has been eight years in Australia, and appeared in Douglas Jerrold's Newspaper of September 30th. The writer says:—"It would be a ruinous waste of money to buy land at the present upset price. It cannot be too generally known that the soil of Australia, taken as a whole, is as poor as any in the world, if not poorer; added to which, the colony is subject to droughts, which render the cultivation of the land generally a very unprofitable occupation, except in the immediate vicinity of large towns. In proof of what I have stated, in 1843, Sir Thomas Mitchell, the surveyor-general, and a number of other witnesses, proved, before a committee of the Legislative Council of Sydney, that the colony contained 25,362,364 acres of land; of these, 7,418,754 acres had been alienated, and that of the 17,943,610 remaining on hand, 12,816,865 acres or five-sevenths, were not worth sixpence per acre. Now this is the land that our Colonists of the Colonial office persist in requiring 20s. per acre for."

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